(b) Does not arise.

(c) The requirement of urea for Rabi 2004-05 crop season has been assessed at 108.35 lakh MT. The total availability for Rabi crops is estimated to be 118 lakh MT including about 11 lakh MT opening stock, 103.5 lakh MT of production and 3.5 lakh MT of imports.

Alternative and unharmful pesticides

†876. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any progress has been made in the manufacturing of alternative and unharmful pesticides in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Registration Committee (RC), constituted under Section 5 of the Insecticides Act, 1968 has registered several bio-pesticides so that dependence on chemical pesticides is substantially reduced. Besides, low dose and quickly degradable chemical pesticides, like sulfonyl urea compounds, have also been registered. Further, the Registration Committee is encouraging registration of safer formulations of already registered pesticides.

Spurious fertilizers manufacturing units in Punjab

877. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a few units manufacturing spurious fertilizers have been operating in Punjab for the last several years from where spurious and damaged fertilizers were being sent to various parts of the country;

(b) whether some persons have been arrested in this case and if so, the details thereof; and

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†*Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.*